THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) SKO & LPG are deficit products in the country. In order to meet their demand in the country, Government approval is given annually to import of these products for sales under administered prices. A quantity of 3396 TMT of SKO and 1464 TMT of LPG has been proposed to be imported by PSUs during the current financial year. Both SKO & LPG are decanalised items and are also imported through parallel marketing.

West Coast Refinery Project in the Ratnagiri District

3590. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a delay in the West Coast refinery project coming up in the Ratnagiri district;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure that there are no disruptions in the said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R.BAALU): (a) to (c) The Oman Oil Company (OOC) the Joint Venture Partner with HPCL in the West Coast Refinery Project, have decided to review their interest in Hindustan Oman Refinery Project in view of their various commitments.

A joint venture enquity participation from suitable partner (s) is being vigorously explored by HPCL.

Supply of Natural Gas for Ceramic Complex

3591. SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH:
SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to provide natural gas to Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh for development of ceramic complex;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BALLU): (a) to (c) There is no proposal to provide natural gas to Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh for development of ceramic complex as the gas projected to be available is fully allocated and it is not feasible to make additional allocations at present.

Discovery of New Gasfields by International Experts

3592. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are unable to increase indigenous natural gas supplies unless new gasfields are discovered; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have been unable to discover new fields on their own; if so, the reasons for not inviting international experts for this purpose?

THE MINIISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R.BALLU): (a) The production of natural gas in the country has gone up from around 49 MMSCMD in 1992-93 to around 62 MMSCMD in 1996-97. The production is estimated to go up further to around 85 MMSCMD by the end of the 9th plan period.

(b) ONGC and OIL have added around 45 billion cubic metres of recoverable gas reserves in the first four